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Most suggestions for textbooks changes emanating from citizen's groups concern three items: the degrees to which content is relevant to all elements of society, to the conditions of all society and to values reflective of the American way of life.

All public school systems of the Great Cities employ similar criteria in making textbook selections. Present practices of the Great Cities are discussed in relation to the Pittsburgh Resolution, a policy of positiveness (eg. what should be included in a textbook rather than what should not be). The role textbook publishers have played in determining the characteristics of textbooks available for use in urban schools is of major concern.

Specifications of textbooks (eg. their size, weight, thickness) and problems concerning the specifications are described.

A guide for the selection of textbooks, ways of defending textbooks should they be attacked, and an explanation of the Pittsburgh Resolution are presented. The thirteen recommendations made involve increased organizing attempts by the Great Cities aimed at improving the quality of textbooks.

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS IN GREAT CITIES

A Report of the Subcommittee on Textbooks
of the Research Council of the Great
Cities Program for School Improvement

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November 15, 1963

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
A Problem Presents Itself	1
Present Practices of the Great Cities in Relation to the Pittsburgh Resolution	2
Comparison of Book Selection Policies of Individual Great Cities with the Pittsburgh Resolution	2
Committee Reaction	5
Specific Assumptions of the Committee	7
Conclusions and Recommendations	8
Appendix	
Guide for Selection of Textbooks	9
Defense of Textbooks	10
The Pittsburgh Resolution	10
The Textbook Revolution	11

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS IN GREAT CITIES

A PROBLEM PRESENTS ITSELF

Citizens have always taken an interest and active part in school affairs. But in these times in contrast to those of the past, some citizens, alone and through civic organizations, are bringing undue pressures on school people and on publishers as to what constitutes acceptable textbooks. Clearly, citizens have both the right and the duty to make known their views on textbooks. But the fact of the matter is that not all patriotic, religious, racial, ethnic, social, and political groups are in perfect agreement as to what constitutes acceptable treatment of various textbook topics. School people are faced, then, with the difficult problems of not only selecting texts which are factually true and educationally sound, but also which will satisfy the divergent requests of so many diverse groups. Such difficult problems cannot be easily resolved.

On the one hand, publishers need to produce textbooks that will sell—sell in sufficient numbers so that publishers will not only recover their investment costs but also a reasonable profit. These are the economic facts that all groups must face. On the other hand, school people want publishers to produce textbooks that meet effectively the needs of both students and teachers. The problem, then, is for textbook publishers to publish texts which satisfy the educational needs of school people and which will sell in sufficient quantity to produce for publishers a reasonably fair profit. When citizens, then, negatively criticize textbook content and topics covered, both school personnel and textbook publishers become rightfully concerned. Both school personnel and publishers have welcomed suggestions for textbook improvement. Both have accepted and adopted such suggestions as have proved to be valid and practicable. Neither group, however, has wished to incorporate those suggestions which could lead to lowering the quality of present and future texts.

Sometimes, when publishers or school people reject suggestions for textbook changes friction ensues. If the citizens requesting textbook changes have not been informed why their suggestions were not incorporated into textbook revisions, such friction develops into great controversy. Textbook boycotts and widely publicized campaigns to discredit certain textbooks are ruinous to both publishers and school systems. The financial loss to publishers is readily seen; school systems suffer a similar loss if texts already purchased must be abandoned and replaced.

However, the losses in time and energy expended in combatting textbook boycotts and the resulting damage to school systems through unfavorable publicity and loss of confidence are also exceedingly costly, though less readily evident. Teacher morale must also be considered. Textbook boycott in a school system may cause teachers to question the existence of academic freedom. It could also lead to the loss of many excellent teachers through both teacher resignations and failure of the system to attract new teachers of high quality.

In general most of the recommendations for textbook changes which emanate from citizen's groups concern three items:

(1) Reference in content and illustration to representatives of all elements of society;

(2) Reference in content to problems and conditions of all levels and classes of society;

(3) Reference in content to our American heritage and values of the American way of life.

Other recommendations, emanating largely from the school systems, deal with the physical proportions of textbooks, the use of illustration and color, the use of "paperback" editions, visual-aid supplements to texts, and means of keeping texts up-to-date through various types of supplements. All of these types of recommendations will be discussed in detail later.

PRESENT PRACTICES OF THE GREAT CITIES IN RELATION TO THE PITTSBURGH RESOLUTION

All of the public school systems of the Great Cities employ very similar techniques for the selection of textbooks to be used in the individual schools. Each system relies heavily upon the professional competence of its Book Selection Committee, made up of a cross-section of the total staff. The degrees of guidance, restriction, and authority imputed to the committees seem to vary a good deal from city to city, but each city has an already established procedure which could without difficulty implement the Pittsburgh Resolution.

The chief difference noted in the comparison of present policies and procedures with the Pittsburgh Resolution is the negative character of present policies as opposed to the more positive tone of the Pittsburgh Resolution in the areas of current concern. Present policies seem to offer guidance as to what should not exist in textbooks if they are to be acceptable, while the Pittsburgh Resolution provides forthright guidance as to what should be included to make a given text acceptable. A brief summary of the degree to which policy statements of individual cities are consistent with the Pittsburgh Resolution is presented in the following paragraphs.

Comparison of Book Selection Policies of Individual Great Cities With the Pittsburgh Resolution

BALTIMORE. The "Criteria and Procedures for Selecting Books" in the Baltimore City Public Schools, published in 1955, establishes the climate in which the resolution adopted by the Board of Public Education, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on February 26, 1963, could presently be operative. The Baltimore criteria do not list specifically that illustrations should be representative of all elements of society or that the content should consider the problems and conditions of all races and classes of society. Neither do these criteria specifically direct a halting of the trend toward increased size in textbooks or a halting of the trend of over-use of illustrations and color. They make no reference to the use of "paperbacks" for the purpose of more flexibility nor do they actually recommend the implementation and substitution of textbooks by visual aids, records or tape recordings.

No mention is made of supplements similar to those made available for encyclopedias and law books. This does not, however, preclude the effective implementation of the resolution as adopted by Pittsburgh for the reason that within the criteria, a framework is already established as evidenced by the following quotations from the Evaluative Criteria for the Selection of Books:

> "The book is free from objectionable material, e.g., prejudice against class, race, creed or nationality."
>
> "Illustrations recognize the equal worth of people with respect to race, color, national origin and creed."
>
> "The book is free from objectionable materials, such as propaganda discrediting American institutions and the ideals of democracy."
>
> "The size of the book is convenient for the age-group to handle."
>
> "Illustrations should have good art quality and should clarify relationships important to the text."

The organization and instructions of the Book Selection Committees could promote consideration of the basic principles in the Pittsburgh Resolution. However, the criteria seem to give guidance in a negative fashion indicating what cannot be included rather than in a more positive fashion directing what should be included in textbooks.

BOSTON. The "General Information and Instructions Relating to the Screening of Textbooks Submitted by Publishers" from the Public Schools of the City of Boston, Massachusetts, makes no specific reference to any of the items included in the Pittsburgh Resolution. However, a careful examination of the process used in the selection of textbooks in the Boston Public Schools reveals that approved textbooks must be judged on a basis of positive answers to the following questions:

> "Are the illustrations in keeping with the text?"
>
> "Does the content adhere to our basic American principles?"
>
> "Is the book too big--too heavy--too clumsy?"
>
> "Is the content offensive to any group, race, religion or nationality?"
>
> "Is the content without bias?"
>
> "Is the content sound?"

Here again the framework for operating under a policy suggested by the Pittsburgh Resolution is already in existence. The Book Selection Committees from the Public Schools of the City of Boston are already in a position to operate as the Pittsburgh Resolution recommends.

CHICAGO AND WASHINGTON. The material received from Chicago and Washington deals with the actual procedure for the selection of textbooks (letters to publishers, number of books to be submitted, dates of submission, formation of Book Selection Committees, responsibilities of Committees, etc.). The material does not delineate the areas of concern for the Book Selection Committees as they decide to recommend or reject a given text.

DETROIT. The Board of Education of the City of Detroit submitted a copy of their "Book Selection Procedures" and a copy of an "Addenda for Textbook Selection Procedure" which describe the procedures used in the listing of text for the Detroit Schools. Within these procedures, one finds reference to the fact that appropriate illustrations with color are desirable. The procedures also indicate the desirability of the use of paperback bindings for use over a brief period of time for workbooks and supplementary materials. On December 18, 1962, the Detroit Board of Education adopted a statement of policy entitled "The Treatment of Minorities in Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials." This policy promotes presentation of a "balanced and satisfactory picture of all groups in American life." It further directs that instructional materials shall be "consistent with the human relations policy of the schools," and that these materials will"contribute significantly to understanding and good will among different racial, religious and nationality groups." This policy also requires fair treatment for all groups in our society in the matter of illustrations and content.

LOS ANGELES. The Los Angeles School Districts use a seven-point list of criteria for evaluating textbooks. A negative answer to any of the following questions which apply to textbooks under consideration will result in their immediate elimination:

"Does the point of view of the author and the content of the material itself contribute to the primary purpose of promoting the ideals of American democracy?"

"Does the material emphasize the positive achievements of American history as well as the public problems?"

"Does the book emphasize responsibilities as well as rights of American citizens?"

"Is the material in keeping with the basic policy of the Los Angeles City Schools to make an objective study of current affairs?"

"Are interpretations of public problems on which there are differences of opinion treated fairly and objectively?"

"Do textbooks set down the historical facts of public decisions without advocating particular conclusions as permanent solutions of problems still confronting the public?"

"Does the material avoid biased or discriminatory language?"

Here again it is quite evident that the existing criteria consider some of principles expressed in the Pittsburgh Resolution, and a committee could use these criteria effectively to evaluate textbooks in light of today's social concerns.

MILWAUKEE. The materials sent from the Board of School Directors of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, explain the technical procedure for the adoption of textbooks. It does not give specific criteria for consideration but rather seems to leave the establishment of criteria to the individual Book Selection Committees. However, the Board policy governing the use of free materials makes a statement to the effect that "free and inexpensive teaching materials must be free from bias and propaganda of a religious or political or other nature."

PHILADELPHIA. The School District of Philadelphia submitted materials that explain the technique by which publishers may have books listed on the annual book requisitions. This material does not mention the areas of concern as expressed in the Pittsburgh Resolution. However, there is one point at which the publishers are requested to furnish American history books, supplementary books and instruction aids on the under-developed countries of Asia and Africa, and Negro contributions to American life, historically and currently. There is a strong inference of an awareness of social groups and classes within American Society. Also, at one point the directions say, "Film strips picturing people of comparatively high economic status are not needed." As in the case of other Great Cities, Philadelphia relies heavily upon the professional experience and sense of rightness of the individual Book Selection Committees in recommending texts for acceptance by the School District of Philadelphia.

COMMITTEE REACTION

The following three items of the Pittsburgh Resolution were considered collectively by the Great Cities Textbook Committee.

I. "Reference in content and illustration to representatives of all elements of society."

II. "Reference in content to problems and conditions of all levels and classes of Society."

III. "Reference in content to our American heritage and values of the American way of life."

These items refer in general to the representation of minority groups in textbooks. It was emphasized by the committee that minorities are of several kinds--Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Indians, Mexican Americans, Oriental Americans, etc.

The committee emphasized that most textbook orientation appears to be toward the middle-class, white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant. The school population, especially in great cities, represents a much more heterogeneous group than middle-class whites. To be realistic, textbooks should reflect the total range of American life. At present they seem too bland and out of touch with contemporary urban life. Textbooks used in larger cities need to focus upon urban as well as suburban or rural life. The committee suggested the need for textbook revision to represent the special conditions inherent in life as it is now lived in great cities by many minority peoples.

The Great Cities Textbook Subcommittee is much concerned with the role textbook publishers have played in determining the characteristics and nature of textbooks available for use in urban schools. The committee is aware that publishers are being guided in their work by some educational personnel from urban centers who serve as consultants or contributing authors, but the committee suggests that the focus on contemporary urban problems has not been made specific enough. The committee indicated the need for improved liaison between publishers and the great city school systems.

Four major publishers indicated they would include illustrations and information on minorities in new publications to be released during the next two or three years. This effort could be considered by minority groups as only a token effort. Information on the contributions minority groups have made could be effectively utilized in social studies, science, reading texts, and supplementary materials such as films, filmstrips, and other audio-visual aids used in children's classrooms and in teacher-education programs.

Textbooks currently seem to lack the approach that experinced teachers use who know not only their subject matter but also urban living conditions. Persons who have intimate knowledge of both subject matter and urban living conditions of all groups should help prepare textbook materials. In this way, there should be greater assurance that the psychological needs of students, the techniques of teaching today's students, and the latest advances in subject matter will be utilized in the preparation of textbook material.

The extent of the investment in existing materials by both publishers and school systems suggests the economic unfeasibility of the abandonment of any large quantity of materials presently in use or available. The timing on new materials, including authorship, production, publication, distribution, orientation, and impact on curriculum is seen as long-range in nature. The preparation of material for the national market with regional differences in culture and mores points up another concern. The committee urged that the long-range goal not be lost sight of, but that in the interim, as a short-range effort, specialized supplementary materials be supplied which include the role of minorities. Material on the contributions minority groups have made to society should be included in both the text and non-text fields--films and other audio-visuals.

The committee expressed the opinion that textbooks of unusually large physical dimension created problems for pupils in desk use, locker storage, bookcase storage, home study, and in general handling. The committee recommended that publishers avoid the oversized dimensions and study the possibility of providing suitable charts, graphs, maps, and other illustrations in conventional sized books, especially in the social studies. A standard size for practical daily use by school children should be the goal.

The committee also indicated that the use of illustrations and color in texts could be a distinct advantage when properly handled. Indiscriminate use of color and unrelated illustrations, often resorted to by publishers for competitive commercial purposes, should be avoided. Instead color and illustrations should be used whenever appropriate for their contribution to the learning process and for necessary eye appeal, picture and context clues, and general readability.

Paperbacks should and can be used as supplementary texts. Two questions require greater study and need to be resolved: Are paperback textbooks more costly than conventional textbooks? Does the use of paperbacks create in school children

a decided lack of appreciation for books as living institutions? Under no circumstances should publishers allow the quality and readability criteria in their paperbacks to deteriorate.

The cost problem involved in editorial research in the development and preparation of new materials in paperback form is recognized. Such costs necessarily must be reflected in the price of paperback editions in new fields. The reproduction of materials in paperback form is not necessarily an expensive process. Great Cities committees could identify what present study materials might be most valuable if reproduced in paperback form. School systems using paperbacks should protest immediately to the publisher if paperback materials are of low quality and poor readability. (See Texas Paperback Textbook Study--Progress Report, Dr. J. W. Edgar, Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas.)

Publishers should make available supplements similar to those now available for encyclopedias or to law book "pocket parts" to keep older textbooks up-to-date and to compensate quickly for the lagging time element in established texts. For example, in the five-year cycle of revision in basic texts, such as science, social science, and history, supplemental materials can keep subject matter up-to-date. Such supplemental materials can also make a text more flexible through presenting regional values. Textbooks can also be kept up-to-date if materials in the form of visual aids (overlays, records, tape recordings, etc.) were available and used by teachers.

SPECIFIC ASSUMPTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Basic texts and non-texts that will meet the problem will not be available in sufficient quantity from publishers in the near future.

2. An inventory of materials presently available is needed in the text, supplementary text, and non-text fields. Perhaps this inventory can be developed by Great Cities or the Textbook Publishers Institute.

3. A review and analysis of inventory must be made against a profile of need in order to determine where gaps exist, how they can best be filled, and by what means.

4. The textbook problem is two-fold, both short-range and long-range, and in two major areas--reading texts and social studies texts.

5. Immediate and continuing attention must be given to this concern by Great Cities and the Textbook Publishers Institute.

6. Long-range effort must be vested in textbook publishers with adequate liaison and guidance from Great Cities.

7. Short-range effort should result in immediate development of supplementary materials similar to Detroit publications in social sciences (Struggle for Freedom and Civil Rights, Role of the Negro in American History and Culture).

8. Such materials as are needed could be developed under the aegis of Great Cities with foundation, Textbook Publishers Institute, or U.S. Office of Education support.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After careful consideration of the problems involved and the available data, the Committee presents the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. Great Cities shall set up a staff project to explore the feasibility of implementing the Great Cities Subcommittee Textbook recommendations.

2. A liaison committee shall be established jointly with the American Textbook Publishers Institute to give priority attention to the special text and non-text materials needed in the large cities.

3. Great Cities shall enlist the aid of national professional organizations (National Council of the Teachers of English, National Council for the Social Studies, etc.) in seeking satisfactory long-range solution to the problem of education for urban cultures. The study of this problem shall include the basic American credo of equality for all, and the great city as a melting pot representing all racial, ethnic, religious, political, and socio-economic groups.

4. Great Cities shall enlist the aid of national professional organizations in the preparation of materials that will focus on the need for the dignity of the individual, for discipline, for self-respect, and for the development of moral and ethical concepts in a manner free from preachment or moralizing.

5. Great Cities shall organize a staff committee to explore ways in which materials could be developed locally to supplement those developed under the aegis of Great Cities or by publishers and other sources.

6. The preparation of text and non-text materials shall be related through recommended avenues of coordination to teacher training in both pre-service and in-service programs.

7. Great Cities shall study ways of assisting the watchdog effort to keep publishers up-to-date, with focus on new needs, obsolescence, erroneous or misleading information, and other types of improvements and revisions.

8. Revision of reading texts for urban use should be comprehensive, representing changes in the body of the text as well as in the illustrations in order to reflect all segments of urban society and life. A revision of the illustrations only is not satisfactory.

9. The Textbook Subcommittee should request a special foundation grant be given to Great Cities. This grant would be used for these purposes:

   a. Preparation of instructional materials;
   b. preparation of teachers for service in urban schools.

10. Research studies should be undertaken of the psychological, sociological and educational needs of urban children. The results of these studies could be utilized in the preparation of appropriate instructional materials for urban children.

11. Teams of representatives from the Textbook Publishers Institute should visit great city school systems in order to observe at first-hand the problems teachers must face as they try to educate urban children.

12. The Detroit idea should be extended to a number of other large cities. Such demonstration projects could help allay the Negro concern that children are exposed to a world in textbooks much different from that actually experienced.

13. A series of "Disney-type" films should be developed. Such films could be used in public elementary and secondary classes, in adult education classes, and perhaps even shown to the general public through the medium of television.

Appendix A

Guide for Selection of Textbooks

1. The Board of Education should have a written policy on the selection of instructional materials.

2. There should be a system-wide committee for the selection of textbooks and instructional materials, composed of representatives of all the appropriate areas of the school system. Sub-committees may function by school level, by subject area, etc.

3. There should be a general policy on the organization of the procedure for the selection of textbooks and the specific functions and place of committees in the total process.

4. The superintendent and his staff should develop an administrative manual which translates school board policies for textbook selection into methods and means of implementation.

5. The Instructional Materials Specialists may assist by developing information forms and guides.

6. The Board of Education should officially adopt all texts which are used by the students. Board action should be recorded in the official minutes of the Board.

Appendix B

If textbooks should be attacked:

1. Defend the committee process of selection rather than the text itself.

2. Quotes from clipping file on use of text in other school systems.

3. Maintain a file of professional reviews of all texts. Quote from this file when defense of a text is necessary.

4. Maintain a file of information on the competitive nature of textbook writing and publishing.

5. Maintain a file of information on the reputation of publishers. Contact the publisher for assistance when a text is attacked.

Appendix C

The Pittsburgh Resolution

Adopted by the Board of Public Education, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on February 26, 1963.

Resolved, that the Great Cities School Improvement Program Committee be asked to place on its agenda the general subject of improvement of textbooks and textual materials in presentation and content, with particular attention to:

1. Reference in content and illustration to representatives of all elements of society.

2. Reference in content to problems and conditions of all levels and classes of society.

3. Reference in content to our American heritage and values of the American way of life.

4. Halting the trend towards increased size in textbooks.

5. Halting the trend towards over-use of illustrations and of color in textbooks.

6. The use of "paperbacks" to permit more flexibility in the use of textual materials.

7. Textbook implementation or substitution in the form of visual aids such as overlays, records and tape recordings.

8. Supplements similar to those now available for encyclopedias or to law book "pocket parts" to keep older textbooks up to date.

Resolved further, that after due consideration of the improvement of textbooks and textual materials, the Great Cities School Improvement Program Committee be asked to make positive recommendations to the various textbook publishers.

Appendix D

The Textbook Revolution

Textbooks are recorders of revolutions--from the rise of Caesar to that of Mboya--but the year 1963 marks a revolution for the textbook industry that may change it for all time to come.

For years textbook publishers have successfully resisted negative public pressure to change textbook content--the demands that call for eliminating mention of the United Nations or Tennessee Williams. However, publishers also have been reluctant to make positive changes--those that call for upgrading vocabulary and content, and texts that reflect the country's social heritage. Such massive changes require a great deal of time and money (it requires 5 to 8 years and $1 million to produce an elementary reading series); and publishers have felt that requests for these changes were so isolated that the revised books would have a minimal market.

The current educational ferment, as described by Austin J. McCaffrey, Executive Director of the American Textbook Publishers Institute, has done away with these barriers. Publishers have realized that new teaching methods--programed learning, language labs, ETV--threatened to move the text away from the center of education. The federal government and various foundations have contributed to the updating of curricula, thus subsidizing the research of publishers. And the public, supported by educators, is making more vigorous demands for improved textbooks. McCaffrey lists ways in which publishers are dealing with the situation:

> Preparation of texts that reflect a varied image of this country. "The old complaints that textbooks concern a Protestant, middle class ethic are no longer true." Texts with integrated illustrations are in use this year; texts that reflect the role of minority groups in America's heritage will take longer to develop. Many school systems are now using supplementary material (e.g., Intergroup Relations, a new handbook for intermediate teachers in New York, suggests that units on music mention Louis Armstrong and Josh White; social studies mention Mary Bethune, Jackie Robinson).
>
> Continuing use of new research on subject matter. Publishers are now working with educators on finding a common denominator of knowledge in English and the social studies.

•Research on the make-up of textbooks. More and more textbooks will be "audiovisual," combined with films and filmstrips. Publishers are developing materials for programed learning and ETV "in substantial quantity."

Population growth and shift in this country have unalterably affected the textbook industry, McCaffrey says. "People are not only surging to the metropolitan areas, but 96% of the population growth is taking place in only 14 of our largest cities." By updating texts and integrating them in content and in techniques, textbook publishers are trying to show that they believe "there is a great deal of difference between having people in school and doing something for them."

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